

Ford Site Planning Task Force
February 5, 2007
UAW-Ford-MNSCU Training Center
Meeting Summary

Ford Site Planning Task Force members present: Carole Faricy, Co-Chair, William Klein, Co-Chair, Peter Armstrong, Shawn Bartsh, James Bricher, Richard Broderick, Ronnie Brooks, Anthony Desnick, David Drach, Terri Dooher Fleming, Charles Hathaway, Deborah Karasov, Angela Kline, Scott Malcolm, Gary Marx, Lance Neckar, Dennis Rosemark, Matthew Schuerger, Stuart Simek, Morgan Tamsky, Bruce Valen, Stephanie Warne, Ellen Watters, Pamela Wheelock, Dave Sellergren

Ford Site Planning Task Force members absent: none

City Staff present: Cecile Bedor (PED), Merritt Clapp-Smith (PED), Luis Pereira (PED), Larry Soderholm (PED), Nancy Homans (Mayor's office), John Marshall (Ward 3 office), Jody Martinez (Parks)

Others agency reps or consultants present: Mayor Coleman, Ward 3 Councilmember Pat Harris, Brian Alton (Planning Commission), Jay Gardner (Ford Land Co.), Stephanie Denby (Ford Land Co.), Bill Vitek (Principal, EDAW), Deana Swetlik (project manager, EDAW), Bruce Jacobson (Close Landscape Architects), David Graham (ESG), Raymond Dehn (ESG), Pongsorn Khaw (ESG), Fred Dock (Meyer Mohaddes), Tom Lincoln (URS), Harold Skjelbostad (Biko Associates).

The meeting was called to order by co-chair Carole Faricy at 5:40 PM. She congratulated the task force members, and welcomed all, including elected officials and others invited to speak.

Councilmember Patrick Harris congratulated the task force, welcomed visitors, and highlighted the City's good working relationship with Ford Motor Company on this planning effort. Mayor Chris Coleman asserted the need for planning, the challenge to recreate jobs, and the historic opportunity for this unique site. State Representative Michael Paymar (District 64B) talked about a current legislative effort at the State Capitol in which the UAW is asking for a moratorium on the sale of land at the Ford site for up to 5 years, an effort he discouraged; he highlighted the possible alternative of the State of Minnesota providing money to assist in the environmental remediation of the site. Ford Land Co. representative Jay Gardner introduced Dave Sellergren as Ford's owner representative on the Task Force. CP Rail representative David Drach highlighted the 12 acres of land that Canadian Pacific Railroad owns contiguous to the Ford site, on its south side, in addition to the 3-mile rail corridor to the east, and stressed how it will be a willing partner in this planning process.

All Task Force members introduced themselves, discussed their backgrounds, and briefly spoke about their interest in the site.

State Senator Richard Cohen (District 64) spoke briefly about current state legislation he is sponsoring that attempts to delay Ford's sale of land, explaining that a time delay in sale would allow full exploration of opportunities to replace jobs lost on the site after Ford closes (including the possibility of green manufacturing).

PED project manager Merritt Clapp-Smith and planner Luis Pereira gave an introduction to the planning process, including the development of 3-5 alternative development scenarios in phase one of the process (February-June 2007), and an Alternative Urban Areawide Review and fiscal analyses in phase two of the process (July 2007-April 2008). By May 2008, a recommendation on a preferred alternative development scenario is anticipated. City staff also highlighted a few key issues for the site, including the hydro power plant, a pending environmental assessment, the railroad spur, the City's draft critical area overlay regulations and parkland dedication ordinance, the MSP airport overlay district regulations, the steam

plant and Ford property along the river, and the status of the UAW-Ford-MNSCU Training Center. The project email is fordsiteplanning@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

Task Force co-chair Bill Klein introduced EDAW as the lead consultant firm hired by the City to assist it in phase one of the Ford site planning process, and Merritt Clapp-Smith briefly explained the consultant selection process. Principal of EDAW Bill Vitek and Project Manager Deana Swetlik introduced the consultant team, and led the task force in a brainstorm of key concerns about the site. Key questions/comments/concerns included:

Process:

- A question was asked about the process to be used in developing the various alternative development scenarios. Mr. Vitek responded by saying a range of techniques will be used, such as charrettes, visual preference surveys, and others. From February-April, the consultants would engage in a physical analysis, while a parallel market demand analysis would begin to inform the scenarios. Three large public meetings are planned.
- The need for task force input on consultant ideas before making them public
- Question: How the market consultant will interact with EDAW's physical planning analysis, and how the possibilities for public funding will inform these two analyses?
- A need to balance – private property, neighborhood interests, opportunities for the site, the goals of public entities
- A need for the task force to clearly understand the constraints and limitations on what is possible for redevelopment of the site, including types of zoning, land use, etc.
- Question/concern about task force rules regarding communication – who & how to talk to the press?

Public Participation:

- Concern about the management of public expectations, and the need to assert that not all questions will be answered in 6 months – no one solution will be advanced. Mr. Vitek said that phase one is about developing a few detailed, development scenarios.
- Concern about transparency and community process, being a Highland, City, and State project.

Highland/City issues:

- Key concern: the new traffic to be created with any redevelopment, given the existing traffic congestion in Highland.
- Key concern: the fate of the Little League baseball fields, currently on a portion of this site.
- A contrast was made between neighborhoods in Minneapolis with those in St. Paul, the former characterized as more interested in rapid and large-scale change than the latter, with the point that St. Paul changes more slowly.

Market Realities:

- Highland should not become a “suburban community” – jobs are needed
- The need to include market reality and economic sustainability in the analysis
- A need to complement, and not detract from, existing Highland businesses
- A need to be sensitive towards Ford employees
- Value of property may change over time, through the zoning recommendation and rezoning.
- Ford comment: Scenarios should make business/fiscal sense. The market value depends partly on the site's zoning, but also on the cost of environmental remediation.

Future task force meetings will be held from **6:30 PM – 8:30 PM** at the UAW-Ford-MNSCU Training Center. The next meeting has been re-scheduled to Tuesday, February 20, 2007, given the holiday on Monday, Feb. 19th.

A Ford Site Planning Process website is to come.
The meeting adjourned at 7:35 PM.

Meeting summary prepared by Luis Pereira, PED planning staff.